

the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), under the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) to eligible IRP intermediaries and applies to ultimate recipients and other involved parties. This regulation is also for servicing the existing Rural Development Loan Fund (RDLF) loans previously approved and administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under 45 CFR part 1076. The objective of the IRP is to improve community facilities and employment opportunities and increase economic activity in rural areas by financing business facilities and community development. This purpose is achieved through loans made by RBS to intermediaries that establish programs for the purpose of providing loans to ultimate recipients for business facilities and community development. The regulations contain various requirements for information from the intermediaries and some requirements may cause the intermediary to require information from ultimate recipients. The information requested is vital to RBS for prudent loan servicing, credit decisions and reasonable program monitoring. The provisions of this subpart supersede conflicting provisions of any other subpart.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3.02 hours per response.

Respondents: Non-profit corporations, public agencies, and cooperatives.

Estimated number of Respondents: 420.

Estimated number of responses per respondent: 9.96.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 12,675 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Cheryl Thompson, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692-0043.

Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of RBS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of RBS estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments may be sent to Cheryl Thompson, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0742, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0742. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 14, 1998.

Wilbur T. Peer,

Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

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BILLING CODE 3410-XY-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

National Sheep Industry Improvement Center; Strategic Plan

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) announces the availability of the 1998 Strategic Plan for the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. Section 759 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, known as the 1996 Farm Bill, requires the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center to submit a yearly strategic plan to the Secretary of Agriculture. That plan is now available to the public.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the Plan should be directed to Jay B. Wilson, Executive Director, National Sheep Industry Improvement Center, Denver Federal Center, Building 20, Room A1311, P.O. Box 281028, Lakewood, CO 80228-1028. Phone (303)-236-2858. FAX: (303)-236-7683.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jay B. Wilson at Phone (303)-236-2858 or Dr. Thomas H. Stafford, Director, Cooperative Marketing Division, Cooperative Services, RBS, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Stop 3252, Washington, DC 20250-3252, telephone (202) 690-0368, (This is not a toll free number.) FAX 202-690-2723, or e-mail thomas.stafford@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, known as the 1996 Farm Bill, established a National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. The Center is to (1) promote strategic development activities and collaborative efforts by private and State entities to maximize the impact of Federal assistance to strengthen and enhance

production and marketing of sheep or goat products in the United States; (2) optimize the use of available human capital and resources within the sheep or goat industries; (3) provide assistance to meet the needs of the sheep or goat industry for infrastructure development, business development, production, resource development, and market and environmental research; (4) advance activities that empower and build the capacity of the United States sheep or goat industry to design unique responses to special needs of the sheep or goat industries on both a regional and national basis; and (5) adopt flexible and innovative approaches to solving the long-term needs of the United States sheep or goat industry. The Center has a Revolving Fund established in the Treasury to carry out the purposes of the Center. The Act requires the Center to submit to the Secretary an annual strategic plan for the delivery of financial assistance provided by the Center.

The strategic plan is required to identify (1) goals, methods, and a benchmark for measuring the success of carrying out the plan and how the plan relates to the national and regional goals of the Center; (2) the amount and sources of Federal and non-Federal funds that are available for carrying out the plan; (3) funding priorities; (4) selection criteria for funding; and (5) a method of distributing funding. In addition, the Plan summarizes the sheep and goat industries' needs and problems as determined from a series of public hearings.

The Board of Directors has submitted this plan to the Secretary of Agriculture and wishes to make it available to the public.

Dated: May 13, 1998.

Dayton J. Watkins,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

Census Advisory Committees on the African American Population, on the American Indian and Alaska Native Populations, on the Asian and Pacific Islander Populations, and on the Hispanic Population

AGENCY: Bureau of the Census, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.